

Dead Tree Patrol at Work



MESSAGE FROM
GENERAL MANAGER AND CEO JERRY D. WILLIAMS

IT APPEARS THE DROUGHT IN 2011-2012 IS still affecting North Texas. A lot of trees were weakened from the drought and have now died. In 2012 we hired a contract crew to patrol over 2,300 miles of high voltage power lines, looking for dead trees that were a danger to the electric lines. In 2012 over 8,000 dead trees were cut down that were in danger of hitting the wires. Most likely we missed some and others have died since 2012 and are now causing problems.

In the past few months we have noticed an increase in outages due to dead trees that are outside the regular maintained right-of-way. For this reason we have once again started the "Dead Tree Patrol". We really don't understand why some trees have survived extreme conditions for decades are now dying. Many of these trees are set back 30, 40 or even 80 feet from the power line, but are tall enough to strike the electric wires or poles when they fall.

Often a dead tree will drop limbs to the point a tall snag is all that remains. Other trees will develop wood rot near the base and are blown over when the right strong wind hits. When the snag or whole tree is leaning toward the electric line a lot of damage can be done when the tree trunk falls.

We generally don't have very many dead trees like this to worry about, but our forefathers obviously contemplated this problem when Lamar Electric and other REA cooperatives were being formed. Our original easement forms in 1938 included the words "and to cut down from time to time all dead, weak, leaning or dangerous trees that are tall enough to strike the wires in falling." Our current standard right-of-way easement form still contains that exact wording.

We normally think of the easement only including an area 15 feet on each side of the power line. This clause in the easement form actually expands the easement to include specific dead trees that are further back from the power line. Of course, if a tree is dead, it will eventually fall to the ground in pieces or one large piece, but it will surely fall to the ground. Recently a dead tree fell on a single phase line that in turn, snapped the top of the pole of the three phase major power line where it was connected. A lot of people were out of power while the main line pole was replaced and all the wires put back into the air. Unless we take action, we can expect this to happen many more times in the next few years.

A three man contract crew has been assembled and have already started work in Red River County. During the first 4 weeks the crew cut down over 400 dead trees. One of these men were part of the original Dead Tree Patrol in 2012. For some rea-

son, we seem to have more dead trees in Red River County. The crew will be patrolling all high voltage power lines looking for dead trees that are a danger to the lines. The crew will be moving quickly and will not have a bucket truck or chipper; therefore they will not be equipped to handle trees in yards or near houses that may have to be taken down limb by limb and/or disposed of. If this crew finds a dangerous tree near a house or in a front yard, they will mark the tree with a ribbon, report the tree to Lamar Electric and leave the tree for a Lamar Electric crew or for the landowner to handle. In most cases where the dead tree is likely to hit a house, we will lower the electric wires to the ground to allow the landowner to safely cut his tree.

The idea is for this crew to move very fast and cover many miles each day. This is necessary so they can cover over 2,400 miles of line in a few months. They will be using chainsaws and ropes. The ropes will help them pull the tree in the right direction. Once the tree is down, they will move along looking for the next dead tree. We are counting on our members cooperation as this crew does their work. **We believe most members will understand that a dead tree is destined to fall down at some time, and allow us access to manage the direction and time in which the tree falls.** Some member/landowners may wish to harvest the wood from the tree, while others will simply let it continue to rot. The last time we targeted dead trees, many members related how relieved they were to have the dead tree on the ground in a safe manner, before it could damage the power line, tear down a fence or fall into the roadway.

The contractor is J & J Professional Tree Service and the three men will be wearing hard hats and neon yellow long sleeve shirts and/or vest. They will be driving a white pickup truck with the J & J Professional Tree Service logo and name on the doors. This crew will have a very limited work description. **They will be cutting down all dead trees that are leaning or a danger to our power lines and that are tall enough to strike the wires if the tree falls.**

All main power lines will be patrolled, so calling in to report a specific dead tree will not be helpful. Dead trees that are leaning away from the power line or otherwise not a danger to the wires will be skipped. If you have a dead tree near your house or in your yard that you are willing to cut down, please let us check it out to make sure it is safe for you to cut. Often high voltage wires going to your transformer or the secondary wires from the transformer to your house can be lowered to the ground while you cut the tree, and then returned to the pole, later the same day.

We appreciate our members' patience and cooperation as we complete this very important project.



1485 N. Main St. • P.O. Box 580
Paris, TX 75461

**GENERAL MANAGER
AND CEO**

Jerry D. Williams

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Member Benefits

- Level billing
- Automated meter reading
- Free bank draft service
- E-Bill
- Visa and MasterCard accepted

Your Local Pages

This section of *Texas Co-op Power* is produced by LEC each month to provide you with information about current events, safety, special programs and other activities of the cooperative. If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact the local office.

CONTACT US

CALL US

(903) 784-4303 local or
1-800-782-9010 toll-free

FIND US ON THE WEB

www.lamarelectric.coop



Youth Tour Applications Open

EVERY YEAR, LAMAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE SELECTS TWO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO attend an all-expense-paid tour of Washington, D.C., which includes visiting the U.S. Capitol and meeting members of Congress.

To be eligible, students must be in 10th, 11th or 12th grade and live full time in a residence served by Lamar Electric Cooperative or attend one of the four high schools served by the co-op: Prairiland, Roxton, Detroit and Faith Christian. Home-schooled students served by Lamar Electric are also eligible.

Applications must be completed, along with a three-page, typed essay titled, *How has electricity improved life in the area where I live?* and submitted to Lamar Electric no later than **5 p.m. on February 9.**

The application is available online at lamarelectric.coop. Submit by email to dctrip@lamarelectric.coop, or in person at 1485 N. Main St. in Paris. It's that easy!

Learn more about the Government-in-Action Youth Tour at lamarelectric.coop. Look for Youth Tour after clicking on the Youth tab.

LAMAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE 2018 YOUTH TOUR APPLICATION

DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 9

NAME _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S) NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

NAME OF HIGH SCHOOL _____

LAMAR ELECTRIC ACCOUNT NO. _____

Applicants hereby acknowledge that the application essay becomes the property of Lamar Electric Cooperative and may be published.

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

Lamar Electric Offering Scholarships

THIS YEAR, LAMAR ELECTRIC WILL AWARD SIX \$1,000 ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS TO students who plan to pursue an academic degree or certificate from an accredited university, college, junior college, technical school or other post-secondary educational institution. Scholarship payment will be made directly to the college, university or school in one lump sum. Scholarships must be used within two years of the award date. Funds may be used for tuition, books, room and board.

Eligibility Requirements

To be considered for a Lamar Electric Cooperative scholarship, the student must:

- ▶ Live full time in a residence served by Lamar Electric; AND
- ▶ Be a graduating senior attending a high school or an accredited Home Extended Studies program within the counties served by Lamar Electric Cooperative.

Six scholarships will be given away at the Lamar Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting on April 21 in a random drawing of qualified students. The winners need not be present.

Entry deadline is April 6, 2018. The application can be found on our website, lamarelectric.coop. Once the application is completed simply click on the email button and **send to:** scholarship@lamarelectric.coop.

Or fill out the application below and mail to:

Lamar Electric Cooperative
Attn: Katie Morris
P.O Box 580
Paris, TX 75461

LAMAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE 2018 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Deadline: April 6

Name _____

Address _____

Name of High School _____

Parents/Guardian Name _____

Lamar Electric Account Number _____

Phone Number _____

RECIPE OF THE MONTH



FCAFOTODIGITAL | ISTOCK.COM

Black Bean Soup

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ⅓ cup finely chopped onion
- ⅓ cup finely chopped celery
- ½ cup finely chopped carrots
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 2 teaspoons minced garlic
- 1 teaspoon smoked Spanish paprika
- 1 teaspoon honey
- 1 can fire-roasted diced tomatoes (14 ounces), drained
- ½ cups vegetable broth, salted
- 2 cans black beans (15 ounces each), drained
- Salt to taste
- ½ cup frozen or canned corn, drained (optional)

1. Heat the olive oil over medium heat in a large pot. Add onion, celery, carrots and cumin, and cook 2–3 minutes or until onion is tender and fragrant. Add garlic and cook 1 minute more.
2. Stir in paprika, honey, tomatoes, broth and black beans. Stir well and season to taste with salt.
3. If desired, purée the soup in a blender, return to stove and heat until warm. Or skip the puréeing, add frozen or canned corn, rewarm and serve chunky-style.

Find this and more delicious recipes online at TEXASCOOPPOWER.COM

Annual Meeting Set for April 21

LAMAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE WILL HOLD its annual meeting at 10 a.m., Saturday, April 21, at Paris Junior High School, 2400 Jefferson Road in Paris. There will be additional information in *Texas Co-op Power* regarding the meeting over the next few months.

Three positions on the board of directors are up for election every year. This year, districts 5, 6 and 7 will be voting at the annual meeting. Members residing in districts 5, 6 and 7 who wish to be a candidate for one of the three available board positions must appear in person at the main office of the cooperative and fill out a nomination form no earlier than January 21 and no later than February 20, as outlined in the coop's bylaws. If you are unsure which district you live in, please refer to the district map.



Circled number represents board district

EXCERPT FROM LAMAR ELECTRIC BYLAWS

ARTICLE III. SECTION 3. QUALIFICATIONS.

No person shall be eligible to become a board member of the cooperative who:

- a) Has not been a member of the Cooperative for at least one year prior to nomination;
- b) Has not been a bona fide resident of the board district for which seeking election for at least one year prior to nomination;
- c) Is any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling electric energy or supplies to the cooperative;
- d) Is an employee of this cooperative or has been terminated from the cooperative less than five years;
- e) Is a close relative of an employee or an employee's spouse ("close" being defined as wife, husband, grandparent, grandchild, parent, child, brother, sister, step-parent, step-child, step-brother,

step-sister, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, and/or sister-in-law);

- f) Has been convicted, pleaded guilty or plead "no contest" to a felony; or
- g) Is an incumbent of, or candidate for, an elective public office for which a salary is paid.

No person shall be eligible to remain a board member who:

- a) Is not a member of the Cooperative;
- b) Is not a bona fide resident of the district for which elected;
- c) Is any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling electric energy or supplies to the cooperative;
- d) Is an employee of this cooperative or has been terminated from the cooperative less than five years;
- e) Is a close relative of an employee

or an employee's spouse ("close" being defined as wife, husband, grandparent, grandchild, parent, child, brother, sister, step-parent, step-child, step-brother, step-sister, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, and/or sister-in-law);

- f) Has been convicted, pleaded guilty or plead "no contest" to a felony; or
- g) Is an incumbent of, or candidate for, an elective public office for which a salary is paid.

Upon establishment of the fact that a board member is holding office in violation of any of the foregoing provisions, the board shall remove such board member.

Nothing contained in this section shall affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any action taken at any meeting of the board or at any special or annual meeting of the members.